

UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE IN BONN: 6 - 17 JUNE 2011

The UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn begins today and is scheduled to conclude on 17 June 2011. The conference will include the 34th sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). It also comprises the second part of the 16th session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) and the second part of the 14th session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA).

The SBI is expected to continue consideration of issues, such as national communications, the financial mechanism, least developed countries (LDCs), capacity building and technology. Following the Cancun Agreements, the SBI's provisional agenda (FCCC/SBI/2011/1) also includes proposed new items on: work programmes relating to reporting by Annex I and non-Annex I countries; adaptation; and response measures. The SBSTA is expected to continue addressing issues, including: the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation; methodological issues; technology; and research and systematic observation. Its provisional agenda (FCCC/SBSTA/2011/1) also contains proposed new items, including the work programme on agriculture, and impacts of climate change on water and water resource management. Under the agenda item on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD), the SBSTA is also expected to initiate a new work programme on issues identified in Decision 1/CP.16, which is part of the Cancun Agreements.

Having reached agreement on its agenda (FCCC/AWG-LCA/2011/5) in April, the resumed AWG-LCA 14 is expected to address substantive issues for the first time since the adoption of the Cancun Agreements last December. The resumed AWG-KP 16 is expected to, *inter alia*, continue discussions on overarching policy issues in a contact group established in Bangkok.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNFCCC AND THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

The international political response to climate change began with the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, which sets out a framework for action aimed at stabilizing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases to avoid "dangerous

anthropogenic interference" with the climate system. The UNFCCC entered into force on 21 March 1994 and now has 195 parties.

In December 1997, delegates to the third session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Kyoto, Japan, agreed to a Protocol to the UNFCCC that commits industrialized countries and countries in transition to a market economy to achieve emission reduction targets. These countries, known as Annex I parties under the UNFCCC, agreed to reduce their overall emissions of six greenhouse gases by an average of 5.2% below 1990 levels between 2008-2012 (the first commitment period), with specific targets varying from country to country. The Kyoto Protocol entered into force on 16 February 2005 and now has 193 parties.

At the end of 2005, the first steps were taken to consider long-term issues. Convening in Montreal, Canada, the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP 1) decided to establish the AWG-KP on the basis of Protocol Article 3.9, which mandates consideration of Annex I parties' further commitments at least seven years before the end of the first commitment period. COP 11 agreed to consider long-term cooperation under the Convention through a series of four workshops known as "the Convention Dialogue," which continued until COP 13.

BALI ROADMAP: COP 13 and COP/MOP 3 took place in December 2007 in Bali, Indonesia. Negotiations resulted in the adoption of the Bali Action Plan (BAP). Parties established the AWG-LCA with a mandate to focus on key elements of long-term cooperation identified during the Convention Dialogue: mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and a shared vision for long-term cooperative action. The Bali conference also resulted in agreement on the Bali Roadmap, based on two negotiating "tracks" under the Convention and the Protocol, and set a deadline for concluding the negotiations at COP 15 and COP/MOP 5 in Copenhagen in December 2009.

COPENHAGEN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE: The UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, took place from 7-19 December 2009, and included COP 15 and COP/MOP 5, the 31st sessions of the SBI and the SBSTA, as well as AWG-KP 10 and AWG-LCA 8. Over 110 world leaders attended the joint COP and COP/MOP high-level segment from 16-18 December.

The conference was marked by disputes over transparency and process. During the high-level segment, informal negotiations took place in a group consisting of major economies

and representatives of regional and other negotiating groups. Late in the evening of 18 December, these talks resulted in a political agreement: the “Copenhagen Accord,” which was then presented to the COP plenary for adoption. Over the next 13 hours, delegates debated the Accord. Many supported adopting it as a step towards securing a “better” future agreement. However, some developing countries opposed the Accord, which they felt had been reached through an “untransparent” and “undemocratic” negotiating process. Ultimately, the COP agreed to “take note” of the Copenhagen Accord. It established a process for parties to indicate their support for the Accord and, during 2010, over 140 countries did so. More than 80 countries also provided information on their national emission reduction targets and other mitigation actions.

On the last day of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, the COP and COP/MOP also agreed to extend the mandates of the AWG-LCA and AWG-KP, requesting them to present their respective outcomes to COP 16 and COP/MOP 6 in Cancun, Mexico.

CANCUN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE:

Following four preparatory meetings in 2010, the UN Climate Change Conference in Cancun took place from 29 November to 11 December 2010. Expectations for Cancun were more modest than for Copenhagen a year earlier. Most were hoping to see agreement on a “balanced package” of decisions and few expected a legally-binding outcome. By the end of the conference, parties finalized the Cancun Agreements, which include decisions under both negotiating tracks.

Under the Convention track, Decision 1/CP.16 recognized the need for deep cuts in global emissions to achieve the 2°C target. Parties also agreed to consider strengthening the global long-term goal during a review by 2015, including in relation to the 1.5°C target. They took note of emission reduction targets and nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs) communicated by developed and developing countries respectively (FCCC/SB/2011/INF.1 and FCCC/AWG/LCA/2011/INF.1, both issued after Cancun), and agreed to discuss them during workshops. Decision 1/CP.16 also addressed other aspects of mitigation, such as measuring, reporting and verification (MRV); and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+).

Parties also agreed to establish several new institutions and processes. These included the Cancun Adaptation Framework and the Adaptation Committee as well as the Technology Mechanism, which includes the Technology Executive Committee and Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN). On finance, Decision 1/CP.16 created the Green Climate Fund, which was designated as the new operating entity of the Convention’s financial mechanisms and is to be governed by a Board of 24 members. Parties agreed to set up a Transitional Committee tasked with the Fund’s detailed design, and established a Standing Committee to assist the COP with respect to the financial mechanism. They also recognized the commitments by developed countries to provide US\$30 billion of fast-start finance in 2010-2012, and to jointly mobilize US\$100 billion per year by 2020.

Under the Protocol track, Decision 1/CMP.6, which is also part of the Cancun Agreements, included agreement to complete the work of the AWG-KP and have the results adopted by the COP/MOP as soon as possible, and in time to ensure there will be no gap between the first and second commitment periods. They urged Annex I parties to raise the level of ambition of their

emission reduction targets with a view to achieving aggregate emission reductions consistent with the range identified in the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. They also adopted Decision 2/CMP.6 on land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF).

The mandates of the two AWGs were also extended until the UN Climate Change Conference, to be held in Durban, South Africa, from 28 November to 9 December 2011.

UN CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS IN BANGKOK:

After Cancun, the two AWGs resumed their work in Bangkok from 3-8 April 2011. Two pre-session workshops took place addressing quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets by developed country parties, and mitigation actions submitted by developing country parties. During the meeting, an expert workshop on the new Technology Mechanism also convened.

The AWG-LCA spent the Bangkok session engaged in procedural discussions on its agenda after Cancun. Following a week of negotiations, agreement was reached on the agenda that will form the basis of work for the resumed AWG-LCA 14 in Bonn. Under the AWG-KP, parties focused on key policy issues hindering progress under the Protocol track.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

MAJOR ECONOMIES FORUM ON ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE (MEF):

The tenth meeting of the Leaders’ Representative level of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate was hosted by the European Commission and took place in Brussels, Belgium, from 26-27 April 2011.

According to the Co-Chairs’ summary of the event, the session brought together 17 ministers and officials from major economies. Representatives from the UN, Denmark, Egypt, Maldives, New Zealand, Poland, Singapore, Spain and the United Arab Emirates also participated in the session. Argentina, Barbados, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia had also been invited to send representatives. Participants discussed how to advance prospects for a successful outcome in Durban that is ambitious yet pragmatic, and provides opportunities for Africa.

FIRST MEETING OF THE TRANSITIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE DESIGN OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND:

Attended by parties and observers, the first meeting of the Transitional Committee for the design of the Green Climate Fund took place in 28-29 April in Mexico City, Mexico. Three ministers were chosen to co-chair the Transitional Committee: Mexican Finance Minister Ernesto Cordero Arroyo; South African Minister for Planning Trevor Manuel; and Norway’s State Secretary at the Ministry of Finance Kjetil Lund.

Four work streams were identified for the Committee, to be led by eight work-stream co-facilitators. The first work stream covers scope, guiding principles and cross-cutting issues. The second focuses on governance and institutional arrangements. The third work stream considers operational models and the fourth addresses monitoring and evaluation.

GROUP OF EIGHT (G-8): The Leaders of the G-8 met in Deauville, France, from 26-27 May 2011, to discuss, *inter alia*, green growth, climate change and biodiversity. The Summit concluded with the adoption of a Declaration “Renewed Commitment for Freedom and Democracy.” The leaders, *inter alia*, pointed to the UN Climate Change Conference in Durban as an opportunity to operationalize the Cancun Agreements and address unresolved issues.